

# COUNTER INFORMATION

NEWS FROM THE PICKET LINE

No. 3

## DENBY GRANGE (Barnsley area)



PICKETS from Kellingley Colliery arrived at Denby Grange at 6 am on Thursday 25th October.

Numerous police and mounted policemen met the pickets. It was rumoured that four men were about to go into work. Before the scab van arrived the pickets began to push accompanied by the usual chorus of 'Here we go, Here we go!'

The police, clearly under strain, began to slip back. They then split ranks, drew batons, and charged the miners. The pickets were forced back except for one man who managed to pull a policeman off his horse. Police closed ranks, their vanguard being the cavalry. One miner then threw a firework into the air: the explosion causing the police horses to back into their own ranks. Horsemen then retreat into rear.

Miners raid a nearby timber yard for ammo, whereupon the Chief Pig orders pickets to disperse. Pickets front ranks split revealing their rearguard armed with sticks. The Police order miners to put down their 'weapons', whereupon a picket shouts out "I'm Spartacus" holding stick into air. The remainder then follow suit. (To appreciate this act of solidarity you must be familiar with the Kirk Douglas epic of the same name. The scene this parallels is the one where the victorious Romans (police) promise to spare the slaves (the pickets) if they betray their leader. The slaves refuse with the cry "I'm Spartacus")

The pickets begin to chant and then bombard the police with their sticks. The police, unprotected, sustain casualties. Cavalry charged pushing pickets back up to the timber yard; riot squad charge. Pickets beat a hasty retreat.

Pickets build barricades, using wooden stakes, halting police. This time the police retreat, pursued by pickets. Police charge once more only to be pelted by stones, bricks and sticks. This tug-of-war continued for three more times.

Eventually police triumphant and cavalry force pickets to retreat to nearby field. Chase continues until pickets driven back into their cars.

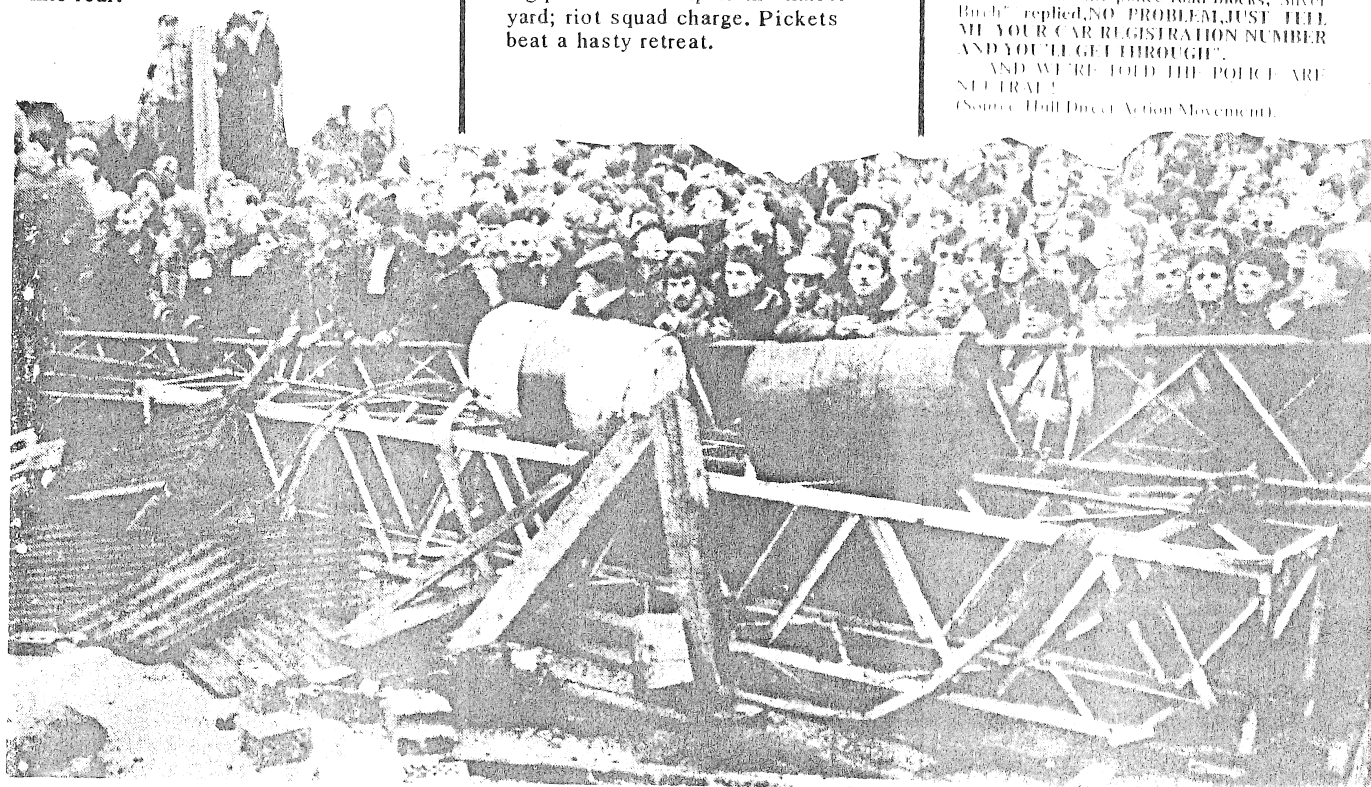
Kellingley pickets leave Denby Grange at approx. 8am.

A striking miner from Fryston pit near Castleford phoned up the so-called "Silver Birch" to find out info on the scab leader. The Fryston miner asked him if any other miners from the Castleford area had phoned him; he said not.

"Silver Birch" then invited the Fryston comrade to a secret meeting of scab miners in Notts. When the miner from Fryston asked "Silver Birch" how he could get into Notts, with all the police road blocks, "Silver Birch" replied, "NO PROBLEM, JUST TELL ME YOUR CAR REGISTRATION NUMBER AND YOU'LL GET THROUGH".

AND WE'RE TOLD THE POLICE ARE NEUTRAL!

(Source: Hull Direct Action Movement)



**TRUNCHEON WELDING POLICE SWOOPED ON A WASTE TIP IN GRIMETHORPE, YORKSHIRE AND ARRESTED 22 PEOPLE WHO WERE PICKING COAL. DURING THE RAID, ON OCTOBER 14th, THE POLICE HANDCUFFED CHILDREN AND BROKE THE NOSE OF AN 8 YEAR OLD GIRL.**

The next day the local people struck back. Miners, women and young people were all involved. The pit management, responsible for calling in the police, were stoned as they drove into work. Action was taken against lorries loading coal at the tip. An old mechanical loader was set on fire and burnt to a cinder.

In the afternoon, a 1,000 strong crowd marched on the local police station. A police car was overturned, every window in the station was shattered, and the police inside were forced to flee. People took further action at the colliery, damaging Coal Board property.

At night crowds of women and children gathered outside the police station. Suddenly, at 10pm, the police charged their vans into the crowds. Later, it's reported that young people broke shop windows in the village High Street.

The Grimethorpe events are not unique. There was similar direct action to resist police oppression in the Yorkshire mining communities of Hemsworth, Fitzwilliam and Kinley in July. 39 police stations in South Yorkshire have been damaged since the strike started.

The actions against the police and capitalist property on the streets of Yorkshire pit villages point an important way forward for the class struggle today. If similar actions breakout in towns and cities throughout Britain on anything the scale of the '81 riots, the Government and the ruling class will be reeling.

Only a combination of police repression and an information clamp down by the mass media have so far prevented another wave of mass rebellions like 1981. As Kenneth Newman, the head of the Metropolitan Police said on October 16th - "During the summer this year (in London) there were many mini-riots which had the potential to escalate to British 1981 proportions. But they were quickly, and effectively extinguished. So effectively, indeed, that they hardly rated a mention in the press."

(Guardian, 17-10-84).

But could the police so easily control simultaneous mass direct action at pitheads, in pit villages, in inner city areas, in housing schemes, in town centres?

**POWER CUTS COULD BE THE SPARK.**

A young miner from the Lothians coalfield told us recently that his mates in the area were saying that when the first power cuts come they're going down to the shops for some free shopping.

Action to disrupt power stations and thus hasten power cuts is vital. Power cuts could not only spark of riots but would also seriously hit industry and commerce.

As class struggle develops into class war and as mass strikes and riots break out world wide, fundamental questions need to be asked. The capitalist system, east and west produces countless atrocities such as pensioners dying of hypothermia while pits and coal fired power stations are closed, such as people starving while food "surpluses" rot. **HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO LET PROFIT RULE OUR LIVES IN THIS WAY?**

When are we going to go beyond struggling to defend our few remaining crumbs, and start fighting to take over the whole bakery?

(Information on Grimethorpe events: Newsline 16/10, Socialist Worker, 20/10, Daily Telegraph 17/10, Times 17/10).

## FREE ALL IMPRISONED IN MINERS STRUGGLE

The full weight of the police and the legal system is being used to try and crush the miners' struggle. More than 7,000 have been arrested. Over 4,000 have been subjected to restrictive bail conditions.

**AND 44 MINERS ARE NOW LANGUISHING IN JAIL.** One is Andrew Bradley, a Derbyshire miner sentenced to 9 months for "criminal damage to an 11,000 volt cable." He's in Sudbury Open Prison. 7 young workers from Armthorpe, Yorkshire - 5 miners and 2 unemployed - were sentenced to between 3 and 6 months for "criminal damage" and "using insulting words and behaviour."

Those prisoners must not be abandoned. While in prison they need our solidarity. And an important aim of the strike should be the dropping of all charges and the immediate release of all prisoners, with full re-instatement in their jobs.

(Information: Black Flag 3/9 and 15/10; Militant 14/9; Socialist Worker 13/10; Wildcat no. 1. More information on prisoners requested)

**Women from striking pit villages in Yorkshire joined Picket lines at Cammell Laird in Birkenhead as an act of Solidarity.**

(16/10/84 Morning Star)

**A miners soup kitchen at Cresswell, Derbyshire was destroyed by fire on Monday 15th October. The whole of the ground floor was gutted. All stocks were destroyed. The fire seems almost certainly to have been an arson attack.**

"A window had been smashed and there had been some sort of lighted paper pushed through."

The police had a total lack of interest in the attack and took almost an hour to arrive after they had been called.

The Womens Support group is now using a church hall to supply meals and are determined not to give up support for the strike.

(16/10/84 Morning Star)

At Hartlepool hundreds of miners attacked the nuclear power station. 2 tankers were damaged & burning roadblocks were set up. (Black Flag 15/10.)

Territorial Army soldiers have been masquerading as police on anti-picket duty - the names and numbers of 26 of these T.A. soldiers are in the possession of 'Black Flag' contacts in Doncaster. (Black Flag 15/10.)

At Bedwas, South Wales, police tried to stop 200 pickets gathering at the British Benzol plant. Pickets hit back by attempting to set a truck on fire inside the plant. The electricity supply was cut off and fire-fighters refused to cross the picket line to put out a blaze. (Black Flag 15/10.)

## POLICE HARASS KIDS

Miners' children are the latest victims of police harassment in the Lothian pit village of Loanhead. Recently police stopped, questioned and took the names of some miners' kids.

The fearless crime fighters then informed the children's parents that they were breaking the law by allowing their children to be on the streets by themselves after 8 p.m. Strangely this "law" only seems to apply to miners children.

Meanwhile it's reported that police violence sparked off the incidents at nearby Bilston Glen on 10th October. 6 pickets were arrested after a police inspector had launched an unprovoked assault on a miner.

(Information: miners at Bilston Glen and Loanhead, October.)

This news bulletin was collated as a service by anarchists and revolutionaries from Edinburgh and Clydeside.

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